

POLS 2294F
The War on Terror and the Politics of Fear
-Selected topics in Political Science-

Huron University College- Fall 2018

Dr. Jennifer Mustapha

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Wednesday Evenings: 6:30pm-9:30pm
Location: HC-W18

Course Prerequisites:

Poli Sci 1020E or permission of the department

My Office: A15

Office Hours: Wednesdays 4:00pm – 5:00pm, Fridays 12:30pm-1:30pm (Subject to change)

Contacting me:

The best way to contact me is through e-mail at jmustap@uwo.ca - During the week, I will try to respond within 24 hours, and on the weekends or over holidays within 48 hours. *Due to privacy rules, you must e-mail me from your own uwo.ca e-mail account.* E-mails are best for setting up office appointments and for asking brief questions, for which I can provide brief answers.

Course Materials:

- **TEXTBOOK- *Terrorism and the Politics of Fear (SECOND EDITION IS REQUIRED)* by David Altheide (2017).** MD: Rowman and Littlefield- on order at the Bookstore and also available as an e-book online
- All other required course materials are available through your access to the UWO library and through provided web links, and will consist mostly of academic articles and relevant media items. **A detailed list of weekly reading assignments will be provided at the beginning of term and posted on the course OWL site.**

Course Overview:

We currently live in a media-saturated age marked by the ongoing US-led “War on Terror,” the concurrent rise of transnational terrorist groups, the increasing securitization of human mobilities, and a populist swing towards inflammatory electoral politics in liberal democratic nations. With these realities in mind, it is worth turning our attention to the ways in which *fear* appears to have become an integral aspect of our political discourses, security apparatuses, social and cultural narratives, and ultimately, of our constructions of Self and Other. What role does fear and threat play in contemporary politics? And what do the politics of fear and threat make possible within the context of the War on Terror? This course examines these questions through a critical assessment of issues and topics pertaining to the politics of fear, and foregrounds the importance of discourse and narratives in the constructions of the social and political “truths” that are increasingly taken for granted in a post-9/11 context.

Learning Objectives:

By the end of the course, students will be able to:

- 1) Show an appreciation for the complex role that fear plays in social and political organization, the construction of security apparatuses, and perceptions of Self and Other.
- 2) Demonstrate an understanding of, and critical engagement with, specific discursive and institutional practices that are rooted in discourses of fear and threat in the context of the ongoing War on Terror.
- 3) Deploy basic critical qualitative research methods.
- 4) Demonstrate and convey these competencies in a clear and analytical communication style.

Evaluation- To be discussed in class and on OWL

(NOTE: Preliminary and subject to change based on class size):

Attendance and Participation:	10% (Ongoing)
Critical Film Analysis:	15% (Due Oct. 17)
Critical Media Analysis:	20% (Due Nov. 7)
Final Think Piece Essay:	25% (Due Dec. 5)
Final Exam:	30% (December exam period)

Course Format:

This is a 2nd year special topics course that combines lectures, assignments and a variety of discussion methods. In general, in the first part of class each week I will usually deliver a lecture pertaining to the week's topic with an accompanying slide/media presentation (please note that my slides are supplementary to the lectures and I will not be providing or posting "lecture notes," so attendance is key). Following a short break, we will use the second part of our classes to critically engage the main points of the required readings and discuss issues relating to the weekly topic and the broader themes of the course. My classes are very interactive- I will not just be standing at the front talking for the whole time. I will often raise questions for general discussion and engage you in classroom activities like small conversation groups, and problem solving activities. As such, **all students are expected to complete the assigned readings each week before class**, and to come to every class armed with relevant questions and ideas in order to participate actively.

Success in this course:

Material covered in one component may not be covered in another. If you **attend the lectures, read the assigned material, put effort into your assignments and participate in discussions and class activities** you will be well equipped to achieve the learning objectives of the course.

Laptop/device use in the classroom:

I love tech as much as the next person, but over the years I have observed that an open laptop or a cellphone in the classroom can become an easy distraction, and students can fall into the habit of surfing and messaging, rather than listening to and engaging with the presentation or discussion that is taking place. This harms your learning and it is also a distraction to others. Please be mindful of this, and know that I reserve the right to ask students to close their laptops or put their devices away on a case-by-case basis.

Index of Lectures

A detailed list of weekly reading assignments will be provided at the beginning of term and posted on the course OWL site.

IMPORTANT: Subject to change, especially in the event of illness or inclement weather. Appropriate notice will be given in the event of any changes.

Date	Weekly Topic
Sep. 12	Introduction to the course
Sep. 19	Fear and governmentality
Sep. 26	Discourses, narratives, and securitization
Oct. 03	Media logics and constructions of otherness
Oct. 10	***** NO CLASS: FALL READING WEEK *****
Oct. 17	"I'm scared. Let's go shopping!" (<i>Film Analysis due</i>)
Oct. 24	Explaining and understanding terrorism after 9/11
Oct. 31	Becoming "News Wise"
Nov. 07	Surveillance, risk and states of exception (<i>Media Analysis due</i>)
Nov. 14	The Iraq war, and selling the War on Terror
Nov. 21	Constructing heroes, victims and villains
Nov. 28	TBD
Dec. 05	Reflections on fear and terror -Exam Review and Class Wrap up (<i>Final Essay due</i>)
	*****FINAL EXAM DURING EXAM PERIOD*****



The Appendix to Course Outlines is posted on the OWL course site.